

## Message Text

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54

ACTION ARA-10

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R 132245Z JUL 76

FM AMEMBASSY SANTIAGO  
TO SECSTATE AWASHDC 0309

UNCLAS SANTIAGO 6839

E.O.11652:N/A

TAGS: ELAB, CI

SUBJ: GREATER SANTIAGO UNEMPLOYMENT RATE DIPS FOR FIRST-TIME SINCE  
1974

1. THE LATEST UNIVERSITY OF CHILE QUARTERLY UNEMPLOYMENT SURVEY FOR JUNE SHOWS A DROP IN GREATER SANTIAGO'S UNEMPLOYMENT RATE TO 18 PERCENT OF THE ACTIVE WORK FORCE. THE PREVIOUS SURVEY FOR MARCH 1976 RECORDED AN UNEMPLOYMENT RATE OF 19.8 PERCENT. TOTAL EMPLOYMENT ROSE BY 52,000 WHEREAS THE NUMBER OF UNEMPLOYED FELL BY ALMOST 8,000.

2. COMMENT: INDUSTRIAL ACTIVITY HAS BEEN RISING ON A SEASONABLY ADJUSTED BASIS, SINCE AUGUST 1975 AND GENERAL ECONOMIC ACTIVITY SINCE AT LEAST THE LAST QUARTER OF 1975. THIS DECLINE SEEMS TO REFLECT THE USUAL LAG BETWEEN AN ECONOMIC UPTURN AND A DOWNTURN IN THE UNEMPLOYMENT RATE.

3. SINCE PARTICIPATION IN THE GREATER SANTIAGO PUBLIC WORK RELIEF PROGRAM (MINIMUM EMPLOYMENT PROGRAM) ROSE BY SOME 9,000 FROM MARCH TO MAY (26,000 TO 35,000) AND PRESUMABLY A COUPLE OF THOUSAND MORE IN JUNE GIVEN THE TREND NATIONWIDE, "ECONOMIC" EMPLOYMENT ACTUALLY ROSE BY CONSIDERABLY LESS THAN 52,000. NONETHELESS, THIS IS, HOWEVER MODEST, THE LARGEST QUARTERLY INCREASE SINCE 1973.

4. ABOUT FIVE PERCENT OF THE CHILEAN WORK FORCE (177,000) IS  
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NOW EMPLOYED IN THE WORK RELIEF PROGRAM. MOREOVER, THE GOC HAS

JUST ANNOUNCED PLANS WHICH WOULD EXPAND THE NUMBER OF  
PARTICIPANTS TO 238,000 BY THE END OF THE YEAR. EXPANSION OF  
THE WORK RELIEF PROGRAM WILL HELP FURTHER TO REDUCE THE RANKS  
OF THE SURVEYED UNEMPLOYED.  
POPPER

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